

to be associated with Ted Kennedy and then-Governor Romney but with which Stacey was unbelievably engaged: the development of the Massachusetts health reform law in 2006. That law provided the Commonwealth with the highest rates of health care coverage in the Nation and served as the blueprint for national health reform. While the rate of the uninsured grew by millions in our country, today in Massachusetts, 98.1 percent of our residents have health insurance, including 99.8 percent of our children. And if Ted Kennedy were here today, I know he would share with all of us that without Stacey, it wouldn't have gotten across the finish line.

Still, there was more to Stacey than big legislation. She saw government and public service not just with a human face but on a human scale. Despite the breadth of her legislative portfolio, Stacey became most widely known among fellow staffers, constituents, and friends for her ability and willingness to help individual patients identify and secure the personal health care services they desperately needed in times of crisis. She was the person you turned to when someone could not find the right doctor, reach the right specialist, or make an insurance company do the right thing. And whether that person was from Massachusetts or Montana, Stacey fought for them with the same ferocity as she would have for Ted Kennedy or for the most landmark piece of legislation because for Stacey Sachs, it was pretty fundamental—if you were in government to solve big problems for the whole country, why wouldn't you work equally hard to solve those problems for the average person who came to you looking for help?

Mr. President, as so many know, after Senator Kennedy passed away, Stacey continued her Senate service working for Chairman HARKIN on the HELP Committee. She was determined to finish the job of health reform—and finish it she did, even as she went on to, in a tragic irony, fight her own battle for life itself against the same disease which took Ted Kennedy away from us all.

Today, we are all fortunate for Stacey's dedication to public service and the example of her commitment as we continue in the work of her life. Stacey was a member of our extended Senate family, but we should remember what she meant not just to us but to her own family. Our thoughts and prayers are with Stacey's mother, Sandy Sachs, and her two brothers, Bruce and Howard, during this unbelievably difficult time.

OBSERVING ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the 26th Alcohol Awareness Month this April, sponsored by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc., NCADD. Since 1987,

NCADD has been working to raise public awareness and understanding of alcoholism, specifically to reduce the stigma associated with alcoholism, which too often prevents individuals and families from admitting abuse and finding resources to help.

According to NCADD, more than 18 million individuals, or 8.5 percent of Americans, suffer from alcohol-use disorders. In addition to those directly affected by alcohol, there are millions more who feel the effects of alcohol abuse by a loved one in their everyday lives—spouses, children, other family members, and friends. The prevalence of alcohol abuse in this country is astounding, with one out of every four U.S. children having been exposed to alcohol-use disorders in their family.

One of the most troubling aspects of alcoholism is that it often has severe effects on those closest to the person addicted and their community. It takes an enormous emotional, physical, and financial toll on the family members of those addicted to alcohol. Statistics show that 75 percent of domestic abuse is committed while one or both members are intoxicated, and family members utilize health care twice as much as families without alcohol problems.

This year's theme, "Healthy Choices, Healthy Communities: Prevent Underage Drinking," is meant to draw particular attention to the severe impact that alcohol and alcohol-related problems have on young people, their friends, their families, and as a result, our communities. Underage drinking is quickly becoming a serious concern in my home State of Hawaii, and across the country.

Alcohol is currently the No. 1 drug of choice for America's young people, higher than tobacco, marijuana, or other illicit drugs. Teens who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcoholism than their peers who wait until the age of 21. Unfortunately, underage drinking is getting worse with 7,000 kids in the United States under the age of 16 taking their first drink each day, which costs the Nation an estimated \$62 billion annually.

To combat this deepening problem and curb these disturbing trends, education, awareness, and prevention programs, like the events going on this month, are critically important. In addition, parents can help to reduce their children's risk of problem drinking by simply educating their kids and keeping a more watchful eye on them, especially as they enter middle schools and high school.

As we continue to observe this year's Alcohol Awareness Month, I urge everyone to take an active role in reducing the incidence of underage drinking across the country: do not contribute to events where minors and alcohol are involved without supervision, be aware of your influence on the children close to you, and encourage minors to stay alcohol free. Together, we can all help to reverse recent trends in the United

States and keep our children from the harmful, lasting effects of alcohol abuse.

TRIBUTE TO DR. RELLA P. CHRISTENSEN

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I am honored today to be able to pay tribute to a truly remarkable woman, and world-renowned dental consultant—Dr. Rella P. Christensen. Appropriately, at its 35th Anniversary Celebration in Las Vegas, on May 18, 2012, the Board of Directors of the CR Foundation will honor the life's work of Dr. Christensen.

Born on September 27, 1938, Rella received a Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene from the University of Southern California in 1960, and practiced dental hygiene for more than 25 years. She established and became the Director of the Bachelor's Degree in Dental Hygiene at the University of Colorado in 1970. Later, in 1986, she earned a PhD in physiology, with an emphasis on microbiology, from Brigham Young University and completed a post-graduate course in anaerobic microbiology at Virginia Polytechnic State University.

Rella co-founded Clinical Research Associates, now known as the CR Foundation, in 1976 with her husband Gordon, a world renowned and respected dentist and educator. For 27 years Rella directed this influential dental products testing institute as a full time volunteer. Her additional responsibilities included being the lead researcher and Editor-in-Chief of the CRA Newsletter which was published in 10 languages under her leadership with a worldwide circulation in 92 countries.

She went on to serve as Chairman of CR's Board of Directors for 2 years. Currently she volunteers as the team leader of Technologies in Restoratives and Caries Research section of CR.

Rella has been a steady, humble, but significant influence in the profession of dentistry, worldwide, for over a third of a century. Helping others in dentistry to find tools and concepts that really work is a passion for Rella. She has presented over one thousand dental continuing education programs, totaling over 5,200 hours, at national and international locations. Guided by her research discoveries, lectures, and writings, dentists are better able to secure their own professional development and understanding of materials, methods, dental products, and their own dental missions.

Dr. Rella Christensen has received numerous honors for her commitment to her field. In 2001 she was selected as the Distinguished Alumnus of Brigham Young University's School of Life Sciences, and now serves on its National Advisory Board.

In 2002 Rella received an Honorary Doctorate from Utah Valley State University. In 2011, Rella was named one of the Dental Products Report "Top 25 Women in Dentistry" and one of the